

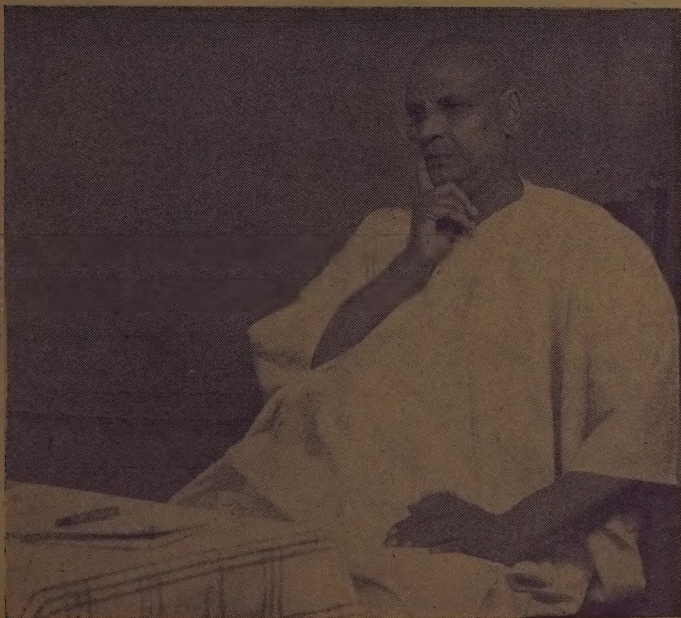
THE DIVINE LIFE

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3rd 15th May 1951.

Sri Seetha Bai,

Bombay.

Be calm, be patient, be
steadfast in your faith and
duty. Nothing will happen
that is not to lead you
to your own ultimate good.

The Divine has a plan
and a method with each
individual. His wisdom
is supreme and don't you
dare to question it.

May Lord bless you,

Sivananda

SPIRITUAL CALENDAR (Ananda Kutir)

MAY 1951

1st	All-Souls Day : Ekadasi
3rd	Pradosha Puja
5th	Amavasya
11th	Sri Sankara Jayanti
17th	Ekadasi
18th	Pradosha Puja
20th	Purnima
31st	Ekadasi
	Ganga Puja on all Fridays

JUNE 1951

1st	All-Souls Day
2nd	Pradosha Puja
4th	Amavasya
15th	Ekadasi
17th	Pradosha Puja
19th	Purnima
30th	Ekadasi : Poor-feeding
	Day
	Ganga Puja on all Fridays

THE DIVINE LIFE

Volume Thirteen

MAY 1951

Number Five

MARGABANDHU STOTRA

नित्यं चिदानन्दरूपं निहृताशेषलोकेशवैरिप्रतापम् ।

कार्तस्वरागेंद्रचापं कृत्तिवासं भजे दिव्यसन्मार्गबन्धुम् ॥ शंभो... ॥

OFFER prostration to Margabandhu (the Lord) who is eternal and whose form is Consciousness and Bliss, who has subdued the valour of all the enemies of gods, who holds the golden mountain as His bow, and who is clad in skin.

कन्दर्पदर्पघ्नीशं कालकन्ठं महेशं महाव्योमकेशम् ।

कुंदाभदन्तं सुरेशं कोटिद्वयप्रकाशं भजे मार्गबन्धुम् ॥ शंभो... ॥

I offer prostration to Margabandhu (the Lord) who is the Great Overlord of all, who destroyed the pride of Manmatha, whose neck is black (due to 'staying there' the poison), to whom the all-pervading sky is the hair, who is the Lord of gods and whose splendour is that of crores of suns.

(To be concluded)

UNIVERSALITY OF RELIGION

(Sri Swami Sivananda)

MAY the joy of oneness and the peace of Goodwill infill you all !

In this world of phenomenon, the general rule is that the subtle is veiled or covered over by the gross. The truth or the inner essence of anything is hidden by its outward appearance. The 'Tattwa' is hidden by the 'nama' and 'rupa'. To perceive the inner truth, the underlying essence you will have to combine observation with discrimination and impartial enquiry. If you fail to do this you will get but a superficial glimpse of things and miss the substance thereof. Religion is no exception to this rule. The real import is not properly understood by a great many. Precisely because of the above mentioned reason. The sincere inquiry into the true implication of religion is conspicuous by its absence. Thus religion from being rightly understood in its true light as the greatest common factor and universally unifying force in the world has come to be misunderstood and mis-construed as a disruptive element that is at the bottom of many a quarrel, conflict and war-fare too. Many would readily quote history remote as well as recent to support this opinion. The term universality with reference to religion will perhaps evoke a sceptic smile in many. I would laugh at such scepticism, for, they err in the same way as a man seeing a coloured Diwali lamp takes the external coloured glass to be the real lamp and fails to perceive the pure light.

The Fundamental Urge

Universality is the greatest characteristic of true religion. This fact is not effected by the vote or opinion of the non-discriminating man. When I say true religion I mean religion in its pure essentials and not its conventional conceptions. The universality of

religion does not lie in the rituals, external marks or traditional observances nor in the personal apparel and social customs adopted by followers of particular aspects of religious life. These are but its ever changeable surface appearances. But a little reflection and inquiry will reveal to us the unmistakable truth that religion is the root impulse in the heart of every human being. Religious sense is one that is common to the entire mankind. Because this religious sense or religious feeling springs out of the very fact of your being a man. At its basis religion constitutes the primal spiritual 'urge to self-awareness' of the eternal principle in man. This principle throbs in the heart of all. All the religions and faiths that ever existed and exist today are but slightly varying processes for the development and consummation of this fundamental universal urge towards the one infinite source and origin of all life. It is, therefore, the one fundamental aspect of human consciousness. All the other aspects of man's consciousness such as that of sex, of age, of caste, parentage, pedigree and power, religious group or political party, all these are acquired by the individual later on in life as he grows up and develops individuality and becomes an adult. These aspects depend upon factors external to him. They change when things change. They also change when the individual alters his thoughts, mode of living, or his philosophy and view of life. A Hindu youth falls in love with and marries a Christian girl. He begins to live and move like a Christian. An Indonesian lady marries a Hindu and begins to feel entirely like a Hindu lady. A Japanese professor domiciled in America voluntarily becomes a citizen of U.S.A. After some

years he becomes oblivious of his previous political consciousness. Count Leo Tolstoy, the high noble man, completely transformed himself into a peasant. We see how these outer layers or "Upadhis" (as the Sanskrit term goes) are easily shed by man as they are later acquired from this world. But you cannot shake off your Soul-consciousness, as this matter springs from the depths of your nature within. And real religion is the method of awakening and making manifest this Soul-consciousness. At different times in human history divinely inspired beings, the prophets and world teachers appeared and presented this self-same method of inward awakening and attainment in a form peculiarly suited to the need of the people of that time. But always the aim and the inner process has been, now is and will for ever be, the same to all mankind everywhere and at all times.

Moral Rectitude, the Foundation

The spiritual being of man is Atman. This Atman is Sat-Chit-Ananda. It is also ineffable peace. Aayam Atma Shanto. Shantam, Shivam, Shubham, Sundaram, Advaitam. Peaceful, auspicious, the Best, Beauty, Radiance, Non-dual: such is the nature of the Atmic experience. To manifest these is, therefore, the essence of true religion. It is the concern of religion to eliminate the evil in man's personality, to develop in himself all that is sublime, good, auspicious and beautiful. Religion does this by first laying down upon the seeker the practice of a perfect good life. All religion is based on the foundation of Sadachar. Moral rectitude and ethical perfection form the universal basis of every religion the world has seen so far. Be good, do good, be kind, be pure, be compassionate, be tolerant, serve, love, give, form its prime principles. One important aspect of universality is thus found in the starting

rungs of its practical ascent. The beautiful anecdote of Abu-ben-Adam, the moving story of Ranti Deva, the biblical narrative of the good Samaritan and the sublime depiction of Gautama the Buddha at the sacrifice of King Bimbisara, all serve to bring out most beautifully and effectively the universal nature of the true essential religious consciousness. The unvarying insistence upon the practical acquirement of the Daivi sampath or godly traits like purity, truth, compassion, universal love, forbearance, humility, absence of anger, spirit of brotherhood, self-denial, selfless service and sacrifice forms yet another beautiful golden bond of universalism in practical religious life. The conquest of brute passions, of lust and sensuality, control of the senses and the renunciation of greed, covetousness, attachments, desires, of pride and egoism which go to form the indispensable part of practical religion are further aspects of Universal prevalence in the true religious life.

Expression of the Inner Self

Real religion awakens man to the consciousness of the unity of all existence and a perception of one Spiritual Essence that pervades everywhere and indwells every being. To bestow the highest perfection, the highest knowledge and the highest bliss of Self-Experience is the meaning of life. The craving for knowledge, for undiminishing joy and abiding peace is inherent in every human being. The unceasing struggle, consciously or otherwise, to attain the above state is part and parcel of life. To bestow the bliss of this attainment is the main concern of religion. *Thus its universality is seen in the fact of its being the root urge throbbing in the heart of all human kind and human life being the active expression of this urge.* Its universality further lies in the fact that in its funda-

OF RELIGION

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mentals the round up of world religions reveals but a single, simple pathway to blissful unity, the pathway to peace, here and hereafter, to brotherhood and universal selfhood. *Isha vasyam idam sarvam, Sarvam Brahma mayam*, are expressions of this experience. The religious sense therefore makes all mankind kin. It enfolds all mankind in a warm embrace of spiritual oneness. Such unification alone could be vital, effective and abiding, for, through religion you link up man to man at the deepest abiding and essential root part of his spiritual personality. This consciousness interpenetrates entire humanity like a beautiful golden thread running silently through all the numerous beads of variegated hue that go to make a necklace. No conflict or divergence in any superficial part of man has any power to mar this sweet spiritual unity, if only you wake up to a full appreciation of this fundamental fact. When religion is thus perceived in its true essence, then the Christian, the Muslim, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Jain and the Parsee will feel themselves not as any particular religionists

but as brother souls proceeding together in perfect harmony along the path-way to perfection and bliss. They will feel their identity of aspirations, of the inner Sadhana and the identity of their spiritual aim. The right view of religion will unfailingly make it into a powerful unifying factor by making entire mankind feel as one through perfect identity of aspiration, endeavour and ultimate attainment.

Blessed Self, understand therefore the true import of religion. Know religion in its proper light. Let not personal bias, force of conventions, or opinion of fanatic or dogmatic persons blind your vision into a narrow view of religion. Embrace, therefore, this religion of heart that helps to link you with the one common source and origin of all existence. Religion is one for all human beings. It is one, universal and eternal. May peace, oneness and bliss be yours. May the One God, the Supreme Being lead us all from the Unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light, from mortality to Immortality.*

By Courtesy : All-India Radio.

The Realisation of the Absolute

THE NATURE OF THE WORLD

(Sri Swami Krishnananda)

THE world, as it is seen, is a presentation of variety and contradiction in existence, a dissipated expression of infinitude. The scene of world-endurance is the struggle of the subject-object-relationship and the relatedness of things thus separated in existence. All empirical knowledge involves relation. One thing hangs on the other for its subsistence through contact

and the lack of the character of self-sufficiency discloses the deceitful nature of the reality of the forms of things marked off within themselves. Everything that is related is imperfect. The dissatisfaction with limitedness in life directs the self to grasp the fullness of perfection in the truth of its integrity, which the individualised condition is not endowed with. The pressure

*The above is the text of Sri Swami Sivanandaji's broadcast over the Delhi station of the All-India Radio, during his visit to the metropolis in the first week of November, last year. The speech was recorded on 6th November, 1950 and broadcast later. A number of radio-talks by Sri Swami Sivanandaji have now been compiled and published into a book form by the Sivananda Publication League (Price Rs. 1/8).

of the reality of the absoluteness of consciousness is the source of the force that compels individuals to transcend their finitude and find their eternal repose in that Reality. The aspiration in all to become the All points to the unreal character of individualised centres of being and to the possibility of the infinite experience of Self-hood. The Vedas and the Upanishads assert: "The One Being the wise diversely speak of"; "There is nothing diverse here"; "Existence is One without a second".

If the world is taken to be real, we commit the mistake of presuming that any changing phenomenon can appear without a basis of Being for it to appear on. All appearance of forms requires a substratum that persists eternally. Change presupposes the changeless. This substratum is the Absolute Being or Brahman. If Brahman has changed Itself into the world, Brahman Itself is non-eternal. If Brahman has fashioned the world through another substance which is not Itself, the secondlessness of Brahman is contradicted. The theory of a *real* evolution of the universe is an illogical hypothesis put forth to suit human convenience and is not metaphysically warranted. Even the classification of the Reality as relative and absolute is a concession to human ignorance, for the Reality cannot be twofold. The Upanishad says that "all modification is merely a name, a play of speech" (Cch. Up. VI. 1, 4). The forms of things change when the conscious states transform themselves. We cannot sense the world and its contents in the same form when the organs of sense and the mind are differently constituted. Change and action constitute the essence of the world and all actions modify the subject of the act. Action is impossible without the differentiation of the subject by a non-being of the subject.

It cannot be said that the subject, the Self, is absent at any place. If It is not everywhere, no action is possible. If It is not everywhere, It is perishable. Our actions in life lead us to a vicious circle. We seem to be doing many things, though actually we do nothing. The difference between cause and effect is based on a temporary blind faith and not on true intelligence. Cause and effect are identical and change in existence is not real. That which did not exist in the beginning (Ait. Up. I. 1) and does not exist in the end (Brih. Up. II 4. 14; Cch. Up. VII. 24) cannot exist in the present (Katha Up. IV. 11). The dance of ideas is the world of experience. All this appears without actual change in existence.

Even the realization of the Absolute Reality is not a change or an action. The modification effected by a thought-process in knowing the Real is identical with what is experienced after the act, i.e., the attainment of the Real. The means becomes identical with the end. The experience of the Eternal Being is not independent of the effort exercised to experience It. All actions done to reach the Real require a self-transformation which is the same as what they aim at through that. The theory that the universe is a stage in the progressive evolution of itself to reach the Infinite is inadmissible, for it cannot be said that the Reality is a constantly changing process to reach Itself, a view which contradicts reason and scripture. Evolution is change and change marks the transient nature of Existence, which is essentially eternal. Nothing that is perfectly real can be said to change and evolve. Brahman, therefore, is without evolution and involution. And, as there is nothing but Brahman which is existence itself, the creation of the universe and the appearance of it must be unreal.

(Serial to be concluded)

WAYS TO PEACE

(Dr. Tan Yun Shan, D. Litt.)

EVERY-body wants peace and is clamouring for peace; but peace does not come easily or even if it comes it does not remain for long. Nobody likes war yet war occurs very often and usually lasts for years. Is it true that human society cannot live without fighting and that life itself cannot exist without struggle? I say "Yes", but also "No." If I say only "Yes," how is it that people are always clamouring for peace and condemning war, and if I only say "No," how is it that there has been more often war than peace in the world? The truth is that as it is human society cannot live without fighting, but fighting is only necessary for progress or evolution and should not be for power or exploitation or domination. Life also cannot exist without struggle but this is only for development and elevation, not for striking and killing each other. It is unfortunate that this truth has been ignored and neglected by people, and that ignorance and neglect have brought all kinds of confusion and chaos. This is the tragedy of human society. This is also the tragedy of life.

The Ideal of all Religions

All the great religions of the world preach the gospel of peace. Jesus Christ said in his Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall see God." And: "whosoever is angry with his brother without cause shall be in danger of the judgement: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the Council: but whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy

gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother; and then come and offer thy gift." (St. Matthew, ch. 5.) The Holy Prophet Muhammed said in his Holy Quran: "Surely the religion with Allah is Islam." The primary significance of the name Islam is the "making of peace" and the idea of peace is the dominant idea in Islam. A Muslim, according to the *Holy Qur-An* is he who has made his peace with God and man, with the Creator as well as His Creatures. (Maulvi Muhammad Ali: *The Holy Qur-An*: Preface: Significance of the name.) The Hindus conclude all their prayers with "Shanti, Shanti, Shanti," meaning "Peace, Peace, Peace!" The goal of both the Buddhists and the Jainas is Nirvana. The ultimate signification of Nirvana, according to Mahayana Buddhism, is absolute peace and bliss; peace and bliss not only for oneself, but for all others; peace and bliss act only for the human beings, but for all creatures; peace and bliss not only on the globe, but in the whole universe; peace and bliss not only in the present world, but also in all the past and future worlds.

The Basis of Chinese Culture

With the Chinese, peace is the essence of their life, their culture and their religion. The oldest and the most important Chinese scripture, *Yi-Ching*, the Book of Change, begins with the Chien Diagram, on which the commentary says: "The Chien maintains universal union and harmony, and thus all progress is advanced and perfected." Here universal union and harmony means universal peace. (*Yi-Ching*: Chien Kua). In the first chapter of the second oldest and important Chinese scripture,

Shu-Ching, the Book of History, we are asked: "To cultivate and illuminate the great virtue in order to endear and fraternise the nine clan relations. While the nine clan relations were endeared and fraternized, all the people would be pacified and enlightened. While all the people were pacified and enlightened, all the states in the world would be harmonized and united, and peace and tranquillity would be maintained." (*Shu-Ching*: Yao-Dien). In another important Chinese classic, *Li-Chi*, the Records of Rites, it was said thus: "The Ancients who wished to brighten the illustrious virtue in the world, first ordered well their states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families; wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons; wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their minds: wishing to rectify their minds, they first purified their volitions; wishing to purify their volitions they first extended their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge depended upon the study of things. Things having been studied, knowledge became perfect; knowledge being perfect, their volitions were then purified; their volitions being purified, their minds were then rectified; their minds being rectified, their persons were then cultivated; their persons being cultivated, their families were then regulated; their families being regulated, their States were then well ordered; their States being well ordered, the whole world could then be maintained in perfect peace and tranquillity." (*Li-Chi*: Ta-Hsio). Such passages in the Chinese scriptures and classics are too numerous to be quoted in detail.

Why This Perversion ?

In spite of all these noble teachings and gospels of love, compassion and peace of all the great religions and faiths, the world

has not been tranquil and the history of human society has been a history more of cruelty and conflict than of love and peace. The so-called Second World War has been over for only little more than five years but already war clouds are gathering again everywhere. The sky is dark, the atmosphere is stuffy, and the human mind is a victim of a thousand perplexities. In fact, fighting and struggling have never totally ceased. Immediately after the Hot War, came the Cold War. Besides this, there has been the Guerilla War in Greece, which although ostensibly stopped at present may break out again at any moment. Then there are the Police Action in Malaya and the undeclared war between the French and the Viet-Nameese in Indo-China, both of which are gathering momentum day by day. Now the spark has already been struck and the War Lord has unleashed its rein in Korea. What will happen tomorrow ? Nobody can say.

After the so-called First World War, H. C. Wells wrote: "The World of the Western European civilization in the years following the Great War was like a man, who has had some very vital surgical operation, very roughly performed, and who is not yet sure whether he can now go on living or whether he has not been so profoundly shocked and injured that he will presently fall down and die. It was a world dazed and stunned. Militarist imperialism had been defeated, but at an overwhelming cost. It had come very near a victory. Everything went on, now that the strain of conflict had ceased, rather laxly, rather weakly, and with a gusty and uncertain temper. There was a universal hunger for peace, a universal desire for the lost liberty and prosperity of pre-war times, without any power of will to achieve

and secure these things. In many respects there had been great deterioration." (*Outline of History*: Ch. XXXIX). What a sad picture painted by him of those days after the First Great War! But the picture of the present world situation is even worse. The present world is like a monstrous injured animal lying in travail. Its body is covered with wounds, bruises and contusions, which have not only not been cured but are continually made worse by new ones. And yet it is still threatened with guns, pistols, swords, spears and all kinds of other weapons, all of which may attack and kill it at any moment.

The Reason Behind

What are the causes and reasons for all these failures and frustrations? It is indeed a serious and grave problem for us to contemplate, almost impossible to solve. Great teachers, philosophers and scientists had probed, diagnosed and analysed it, but to judge by results the effect of their wisdom is negligible. According to Lord Buddha, three things which are called the "Three Poisons" are the source or root of all the evils, miseries, tragedies, misfortunes and calamities in human life, as well as in the world at large. What are these "Three Poisons"? They are: (1) The poison of desire and greed, (*Tan-Tu* in Chinese, *Raga* in Sanskrit); (2) The poison of anger and hatred (*Chen-Tu* in Chinese, *Dvesa* in Sanskrit); and (3) The poison of ignorance and stupidity (*Chih-Tu* in Chinese, *Moha* in Sanskrit). The last one is again the spring of the first two. As it is said in one Buddhist scripture: 'People always cherish desire and greed for benefit and advantage harbour anger and hatred for disadvantage and dis-appointment. These passions came out not from wisdom but from false and wrong views. They are therefore called ignorance and stupidity. These three poisons

are the roots of all distresses and troubles." (The Commentary on the Prajna Paramita Sutra. Ch. 31 in Chinese). So far as I know this is the best diagnosis and analysis of the world disease but it could be further amplified and supplimented. I think, besides these, the prime causes of war are the following:—

- (1) The evil spirit of individual and racial superiority;
- (2) The evil spirit of private and national self-interest;
- (3) The wanton ambition for social and political power;
- (4) The wanton ambition for personal and state vainglory;
- (5) The stupid fears and suspicions of others;
- (6) The stupid jealousy and envy towards others.

Search for Remedy

After having diagnosed the disease, we must find out the remedy. Again many great teachers, philosophers, sages and saints have suggested and provided many prescriptions for saving humanity from degeneration and the world from destruction.

The Ten Commandments of Moses (*The Holy Bible*: Deuteronomy, 5.) and the Sermon on the Mount of Jesus Christ (*New Testament*: St. Matthew, 5, 6, 7.) are well known. The Holy Prophet Muhammed prescribed for his followers five principal duties or ordinances: (1) Tashahhud, Recital of the Kalima or Confession of Faith; (2) Salat, Recital of Prayers; (3) Saum, Fasting; (4) Zakat, Almsgiving; and (5) Hajj, the Pilgrimage. The most important of these ordinances for world salvation are (3) Fasting and (4) Almsgiving; for Fasting is to purify oneself, Almsgiving is to benefit others, both of which will lead humanity to peace. Besides these there are

a number of duties of lesser importance, which are said to be necessary, without being obligatory. Further, in a descending scale of necessity, there are many exercises which are voluntary; these are works of merit and supererogation. (C. R. North: *An Outline of Islam*).

Lord Mahavira prescribed the Twelve Lay Vows and the Eleven *Pratima* for laymen, the Five Great Vows for the ascetics, and the Three Jewels for all. All of these are ways leading to perfect peace and *Moksha* or salvation. Here we may mention only the Three Jewels and the Five Great Vows. The three jewels are: (1) *Samyak Jnana*, right knowledge; (2) *Samyak Darsana*, right faith, and (3) *Samyak Caritra*, right conduct. The five great vows are: (1) *Ahimsa*, non-killing; (2) *Asatya tyaga*, speaking the truth, (3) *Asteya vrata*, non-stealing; (4) *Brahmacharya*, observing chastity, and (5) *Aparigraha vrata*, non-possession. (Mr. Sinclair Stevenson: *The Heart of Jainism*). According to the *Guru Grantha*, the Bible of the Sikhs, salvation is attained by serving God through serving His Creation. The first step on the path begins in the service of the family; it extends to that of friends and others till it broadens into continuous unselfish service for all. The disciple on the path must set in motion the five-fold process of purification: First, he must refrain from sin; secondly, he must learn the meaning of duty. Thirdly, he must lose the sense of "I-ness" by serving others. Fourthly, he must learn to control the mind. Fifthly he must draw near to God by His name. (Raja Sir Daljiet Singh: *Introduction to Sikh Ceremonies* by Sirdar Sir Jogendra Singh).

The Buddhist Approach

Lord Buddha was called "the king of Medicine", who cured all kinds of diseases,

physical, mental and spiritual, human and non-human. The Buddhist list of creeds, precepts and rules regulating the human life such as the "Four Noble Truths", the "Eight fold Right Path", the "Five Commandments", the "Ten Good Deeds", the "Thirty-seven Ways", the "Five Hundred Rules", etc. is perhaps the longest among those of all the great religions. It was said that Lord Buddha prescribed 84,000 methods to cure the 84,000 mortal distresses of humanity! But the most general and important teachings of Lord Buddha for the liberation of human society as well as for creating and maintaining peace in the world are embodied in the "Six Paramitas", the "Four All-embracing Virtues", and the "Four Boundless Compassions." The six Paramitas are: (1) *Dhana*, or charity; (2) *Sila*, or moral conduct; (3) *Ksanti*, or patience; (4) *Virya*, or devotion; (5) *Dhyana*, or contemplation and (6) *Prajna*, or wisdom. (The Six-Paramitas-Sutra, Lu-Tu-Ching in Chinese). The Four All-embracing Virtues are: (1) *Dhana*, or giving what others like, (2) *Priyavachana*, or affectionate speech; (3) *Arthakritya*, or conduct profitable to others and (4) *Samanarthatva* or co-operation with and adaptation of oneself to others. (A Sutra taught by Buddha to A Benevolent King, Jen-Wang-Ching in Chinese). The Four Boundless Compassions are: (1) *Maitri*, boundless kindness, or bestowing of joy or happiness to all; (2) *Karuna*, boundless pity, or to save all from suffering; (3) *Mudita*, boundless joy on other's happiness; and (4) *Upeksha*, boundless indifference, i. e., rising above the emotions, or giving up all things, e. g., distinctions of friends and enemy, love and hate, etc. (*Abhidharma-Kosa-Shastra*, ch. 29.)

Reflections by Hindu Sastras

The numerous Hindu Shastras prescribed

rules and laws called Dharma to govern the Hindu life and conduct such as those taught by Manu: "Harmlessness (1); Truth-speaking (2); Refraining from theft (3); and Control of senses (4); these are the essence of Dharma". And the Chandogya Upanishad also said in allegory: "Austerity (1); Almsgiving (2); Uprightness (3); Harmlessness (4); Truthfulness (5); these are one's gifts for the priests." The Rishis classified the Vedas into two sections: (1) the Karma-Kanda, dealing with ceremonials; and (2) the Jnana-Kanda, dealing with knowledge. These were later on more systematically developed into and carried forward by the different systems of Yogas, such as (1) the Raja-Yoga; (2) Jnana-Yoga; (3) Bhakti-Yoga; (4) Karma-Yoga etc. The foundation of these Yogas are the Yama and Niyama, each numbering five. The five items of Yama in the words of Patanjali are: (1) "Abstinence from non-injuring and killing, being established, all hostilities are given up by the individual practitioners." (2) "Truthfulness, when established, leads to the bestowal of fruits

for actions". (3) "Non-stealing, when established, all kinds of wealth approach (the Yogi)." (4) "Celebacy, being established, vigour is obtained." (5) "Abstinence from greed, being established, comes the knowledge of the how of existence or births." The five items of Niyama, also in the words of Patanjali, are: (1) "By purification comes the disgust for one's own body and cessation of contact with others. On the purity of Sattwa, arise cheerfulness of mind, one-pointedness of mind, conquest of the senses, and fitness for the realisation of Atma." (2) "By contentment, supreme happiness is obtained." (3) "Through mortification, due to the destruction of impurities, arise psychic powers in the body and senses". (4) "By study of the scriptures comes the communion with the tutelary deity". (5) "By self-surrender comes the attainment of the superconscious state." All of these lead humanity to freedom and the world to peace. (Patanjali: *Yoga Sutra*; and Sri Swami Sivananda *Saraswati: Raja Yoga*).*

LET INDIA LEAD

(Sri Swami Rajeswarananda)

LIFE to-day demands the creation of a heaven on earth and goodwill among mankind. Civilisation to-day looks fatigued, creates complexities, fails to cure the evils, seems to whirl on the wheels of man's blind passions and is thus reduced to the final stage of bankruptcy. Each nation to-day seems to hunt after the broken arcs in the name of democracy and diplomacy, missing a perfect orb, due to mortal stagnation and lack of spiritual illumination. World to-day is be-

ing built on land, in the air, on atom bomb, and the naval bases but not on the basis of love, truth and unity. Even the biological theory of the survival of the fittest giving no room for hermit nation in this world, does not offer an explanation of human pugnacity.

We have to-day to conquer the atom bomb with our Atmic balm. "Up India! Conquer the whole world with your spirituality", so said Swami Vivekananda.

*In his next article, which is written in continuation to the above one, Dr. Tan Yun Shan suggests twelve points for achieving a lasting peace in the world. The article will appear in *The Divine Life* in instalments.

Mahatma Gandhi put this ideal dictum into practice in his own humble way and consequently politics in his hands slipped into philosophy like a drop merging into the ocean.

Life, a Divine Music

The world we all live in is a cosmos and not a chaos. It is a uni-verse and not a multi-verse. It is an indivisible whole. It is orderly and not discordant. The notes of peace in the universe express the rhythm and rhyme of life like an orchestral music. In case law is disturbed in its balance, the sweetness of the symphony is marred and instead we have a medley of noises. We should be careful in not to press the wrong keys by mistake and extract discordant notes in life.

Life itself is a song, a poem of the infinite. The notes in the song are the daily thoughts, words and deeds of an individual. These thoughts, words and actions of an individual have to be set to music to produce melody, a harmonious vibration in life. Anyhow the song of life has to be sung by every one in whatever meter or rhyme. As such we should make our life a sweet mystical music of the Divine. It is then we strike a note of peace in the temple of our daily life.

The Cosmic heart throbs equally in the soul-temples of one and all. The one white Flame of Truth ever shines in all the multi-coloured lamps of various teachings. The one Divinity dwells impartially in all the churches, mosques, temples and tabernacles of the world. Such a religious consciousness of harmony is as broad as the sky, allowing all luminaries to shine in its spacious amplitude.

The Integral Pivot

The deep psychological truth in the heart of each and every one is the intense longing for happiness, for balance, for harmony and for freedom in life, consciously

or unconsciously. There is thus an innate hankering of the soul for something that is super-physical and super-mental which will help man transcend his limitations of life. This instinct of man has urged him on to different phases of religion. All religions clearly show that the supreme Reality is unconditioned by time, space and causation and is the basic principle of the universe. Unless there is unity at the universal heart, we cannot understand variety. The spirit of religion does definitely solve the problems of mankind by the dynamic emphasis upon the divinity of man.

Mere political and economical, social and communal adjustments and re-adjustments do not bring in a better order of things with a permanent value amidst the distracting diversities of the present age. Therefore, the foundation for a better humanity has to be sought in the education of the religious sense by rediscovering the vitality latent in religion and its utility in the daily life of an individual. Even the national morality cannot prevail in exclusion of religious principles, whatever might be the influence of refined education on the minds of the people.

Man needs to-day not more drugs but health, not more knowledge but wisdom, not more laws but life, not more service but love, not more societies but unity, not more nations but humanity, and not more dogmas but divinity—the realisation of religion. This synthetic view of life paves the way for the national and inter-national realisation of the Reality of all realities, the Religion at the back of all religions, and leads to the ideal of oneness of the human race, be the individual black or brown, white or yellow.

Soul of true Civilisation

Provincialism in truth is a contradiction in terms. Religion is the most vital, the

most permanent and the most determining element in human life. It cannot bribe anybody with a promise of heaven or make a threat of hell. It awakens man to the underlying unity of the Self, which science and philosophy coldly assure. It creates heroes of peace and provides a spiritual climate that makes the operation of the lower forces of strife and discord impossible. In fact, our daily life is our temple and religion in the midst of richness of variety and manifoldness of diversity. Religion is written in the life of every individual and one has to study it there. Religion cannot be taught by words, however subtle, but can be caught by intuitive experience.

Such a divine life is the very soul of true civilisation, the normal law of one's being and the crowning glory of immortality. It enables us not to act for success but to find success in all our actions, not to merely love one another but be one another expressing the solid truth that every living being is a moving temple of the Almighty and not to seek God anywhere but to see God shining forth from every face and everywhere.

The True Universal

As one grows bigger in spiritual wisdom, his nature unfolds, his consciousness expands until the whole world becomes his abode and all mankind his family. There is thus a common and cultural basis on which one and all can stand and embrace one another as members of the great family of humanity, realising the universal unity underlying the diverse faiths in the world and thus behold the many coloured lights harmonise into one supreme radiance. Unity does not mean uniformity. Uniformity is not universality. Universality is not totality of all individuality put together. True individual is the universal. True universal is the only individual. Unity is the truth of religion and religion of truth.

Universalism is not a dry intellectualism or a wet sentimentalism or a vague abstraction or a limited comprehension. It is an expression of itself in particulars just as the infinite expresses itself in the finite. It does not spring or sprout from the spheres of any society, sect, church, cult, creed, country and the like, since it cannot be institutionalised. The beauty of its expression and experience consists in its being felt, realised and declared in, through and beyond everything. It is the warm sunshine that spreads its universal heat and rays into every tree in a grove, making it grow in its own place according to its own law of nature, [the law of its own being and thus put forth its own flower and fruit. It makes every individual heart to pour out the treasures of divine life.

The Need of the Day

No sect but a synthesis, no church but a university of spiritual culture, is the need of the day to lead humanity on to freedom. The religious harmony ought to be synthetic and not syncretic, vital and not vague. Its conduct has to be shaped in accordance with the sublime ethics of universal love and charity. Proselytising is not manly but criminal. Unlike man-made conversion, spiritual conviction is based on the expression and the experience of the universal. Spiritual conviction is not horizontal from one formal faith to another, which is all husk and shell, just like entering from one cage into another. But spiritual conviction is vertical from the lower truth to higher truth, from the known to the unknown, from the ephemeral to the eternal.

What is Religion ?

In religion there can be no compulsion, condemnation, calculation and constraint. There is room for every sail on the sea, for every wing in the air, for every star in

the sky. Each has to grow in the soil most suited to his soul.

Religion is not mysterious, miraculous, mechanical, material and mundane. Religion is no sectarian strife, no paraphernalia of the brass band and the bugle, no self-sufficiency of organisation, no happy-go-lucky conviction, and international ceremony or sentimentality. Religion is not a tool for a trade. It is no belief to be held, no collection of forms to be followed, no creed to grant one entrance into a church, or a temple, or a mosque with an air of pride, prestige and privilege. It is not an empty formula but a concrete realisation of Divinity.

Religion is a wholesale dealer, whereas all other sciences are retail sellers. The spiritual life lives in the eternal and is rooted in the infinite. It emphasises equality rather than quantity, the individual rather than the mass. The individual is the key to life's problem.

"Man is an expression of God and God is the reality of man. God in chains is man, and man free from chains is God", so said Sri Ramakrishna. God deluded is man, and man perfect is God. God is an infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere and whose centre is everywhere, whereas man is the same infinite circle whose circumference is nowhere but whose centre is located in a particular body. Shifting the centre from the particular and identifying it with that of the centre from the universal is what is meant by God-consciousness. Man seems to be an embodied individual soul whereas God is the all-pervading and permeating Self. Break the individual structure of man and there is God Himself. It is silencing the noise of the ego to hear the voice of the Divine.

It is breaking wide open the finite structure of an individual consciousness and transcending the idea of an embodied individual ego that walls between man and man, brother and brother, and nation and nation.

Let India Lead

Religion demands renunciation of "I" and "mine" through discrimination of the real and the unreal, and through intuition of the one and the only Absolute Reality. The ideal of renunciation is no denunciation but deification, no committing diabolism but giving up false clinging and foul imagination based on ignorance. Renunciation is most natural and simple thing, as natural as that of the flower should drop off when the fruit comes, or that darkness should fade away when the light dawns. Renunciation and discrimination lay the foundation of spiritual life.

Religion is the life-force of the most permanent Peace that heals the wounds of the world. It is the saintliness of the saints, the wisdom of the wise and the strength of the strong. It moves the world, all nations and all races to one and only Selfhood which includes and transcends the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. It is the lively calm that is keenly active unruffled in the ebb and flow of life. It is a dawn, a new awakening, a divine awareness into the meaning and mystery of life. It is the joy of oneness and the bliss of all-ness. Let us thus sit on the throne of Truth as a prince of peace, directing our activities, singing the song of all-embracing love, carrying the precious light of toleration and waving the banner of freedom to one and all. Let India take the lead of disseminating the gospel of the real religion in this strife-worn world, through her own example.*

THE SYMBOL : OM

(Sri D. S. Krishna Aiyar)

All is the letter OM. All that was, that is and that will be, is the OM. And what is beyond all time is also OM.

—Mandukya Upanishad.

THE origin of the Universe is OM. Creation commences by an initial movement or vibration (Spandana) in the Prakriti-Shakti (Nature-force). The approximate sound of this movement at the time of Srishti (creation) is the Mantra OM. OM is the Moola Mantra, the Mantra of all Mantras. The whole of the four Vedas consists of Mantras which proceed from OM, the Pranava Mantra. No Mantra is efficacious without OM at the beginning.

Ichha (will), Gyana (knowledge), Kriya (action), are the Trinity of Powers which are represented by the letters 'A', 'U', 'M'.

OM is Sabda Brahman. It is the root of all sounds. Brahman which is all-comprehensive can only be represented by a sound symbol which is equally all-comprehensive. OM was discovered to be the counterpart of Brahman.

OM consists of three sounds represented by three letters 'A', 'U', 'M'. The first is the first of the gutturals, and last is the last of the labial sounds, and the middle 'U' is produced by throwing the wind over the whole of the tongue. Thus these three fundamental sounds may be considered to represent and include all possible sounds that man is capable of uttering. Hence OM is considered to be the sound symbol of Brahman.

What is OM is verily the higher and lower Brahman. Therefore the knower attains either of the two by this means.

—Prasnopanishad.

The Supreme, unmanifested, absolute Brahman is the higher Brahman and the manifested Hiranyagarbha is the lower Brahman.

OM being the sound symbol of Brahman, it represents the manifested state of Brahman by its audible sound and the unmanifested by its inaudible form known as Ardhamatra. Meditation on the first syllable gives this world; on the second syllable, the world of moon; on the three syllables, the world of Brahma, denoting that the meditator attains the path of Krama-Mukti.

OM has three Matras. The first Matra represents Rig; the second, Yajus; the third, Sama. Thus the three Mantras represent the three Vedas. From the three Matras come out the three feet of Gayatri. From the three feet of Gayatri come the three Vedas and the three worlds.

From 'A' came out the first foot of Gayatri which expanded into Rig Veda. From 'U' came out the second foot of Gayatri which expanded into Yajus. And from 'M' came out the third foot of Gayatri which expanded into Sama.

The first is hymnal; the second is devoted to work; and the third to knowledge.

Every kind of Trinity is represented by OM, says Swami Sivananda :

1. Satva, Rajas and Tamas.
2. Vishnu, Brahma and Siva.
3. Past, Present and Future.
4. Prakriti, Jivatma and Paramatma.
5. Viswa, Taijasa and Pragna.
6. Jagrat, Swapna and Sushupti.
7. Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Ishwara.
8. The three letters—A, U and M.
9. Birth, Life and Death.
10. Creation, Preservation and Destruction.
11. Ichha, Gyana and Kriya.

OM is the Pratika or the representative of the radical vital potential of the Universe and of the Trinity of energies. Through worship of and meditation of the Pratika, man, according to Advaita Vedanta, realises himself as the One Vital Shakti.

OM is the great Primal Mantra (Mahabija). For, it is the source of all others and of all compounded sounds. Swami Krishnananda gives us in a few words a most satisfying and illuminating interpretation of OM in his commentary on *Moksha Gita*.^{*} He says :

"When the word OM is repeated with the proper Bhava, the whole system of the body and the mind is charged with powerful vibrations of light, purity, peace and harmony. Constant repetition of OM in the proper manner will cure all diseases, balance the mind and remove distractions. The chanting of OM from the Para to Vaikari has got an equilibrating character, and so, powerfully spiritualises the being of the chanter. There is an occasion for the automatic Kumbhaka state of the Prana and the stability of thought during OM-chanting, and hence the feeling of OM prepares the ground for the highest Nirguna meditation where the absolute character of the object of meditation is conceived of and affirmed. Chanting of OM leads the mind to the common ground of the Self where absolute harmony reigns supreme."

MY VISIT TO SIVANANDASHRAM

(Dr. Mohammed Hafiz Syed, Ph. D., D. Litt.)

MY long cherished desire to see the Sivanandashram at close quarters was fulfilled when I visited it on the 1st of February 1951. I was gratified to see the working of this Ashram, the atmosphere of which I found surcharged with what is called 'liberty, equality and fraternity'. There was no trace of priestly dictatorship, nor any hallow of unapproachable divinity embodied in the Guru of the Ashram. Swami Sivananda's fascinating and sociable manners, his utter humility and self-forgetfulness, were unforgettable things that I have ever noticed in any Ashram which I have visited upto now.

What he has been preaching through scores of books, pamphlets, magazines I found them translated in his every-day life. He made no distinction in his daily dealings between high and low, great and small, learned and ignorant. He treats them all alike as his equal friends and children. His very look inspires confidence in every heart which yearns to greet him both as a father and as a mother, his tenderness being so

motherlike. It will not be an exaggeration to say that his whole being is an embodiment of love, sociability, friendliness, generosity and utter humility. To quote a sacred scripture, he is a 'true Brahmin' in the sense that he is a 'friend of every creature'.

While I was going round the Ashram, a separate hut was pointed out to me where a leper was kept for treatment : he was picked up from the street where he was lying in dying condition. The Ashramites treated him with as much care as they treat a member of their own Ashram. He was nursed and brought back to health. This is not a solitary example of the selfless service which the young and old Prahmacharis and Sanyasis are rendering to the suffering humanity. I found the desire for service uppermost in the hearts of all the inmates of the Ashram. To them, literally speaking, *work was worship*.

In one of the temples attached to this Ashram I noticed that Akhanda Kirtan (unremitting recitation of God's name) and Japa was going on and yet those who recited

^{*} Published by the Sivananda Publication League, Rishikesh (Himalayas).

the Mantras by word, of mouth were also doing something with their hands as well.

This Ananda Kutir Ashram is situated in Muni-ki-reti, two miles away from Rishikesh town, just on the bank of the holy Ganges whose waters are as transparent as a glass without any mud or sweage as one notices in the Gangetic plains. There are a number of terraced buildings in which various departments of the Ashram are housed. Swamiji himself has a room and a verandah by himself where he spends his leisure moments and takes his rest. Every Sadhaka, Brahmachari and Sanyasi is assigned a separate room. They all have to dine together in the dining room. The quality of food served in the dining hall was nourishing and sufficient in quantity. About two hundred persons have a hearty meal every day. The kitchen is in-charge of some Sadhaks who attend to the drudgery of kitchen work most ungrudgingly. The cleanliness of pots and pans is simply exemplary.

There are guest-houses for visitors whose comforts are carefully attended to.

There is a big room where Swamiji sits and attends to his daily office work, and a number of Sadhaks sit and work with him in the same room. There are eleven typewriters which are constantly at work.

The government has provided this Ashram with a Post Office but the work is so heavy that three persons of the Ashram assist the Sub-postmaster to complete the postal work every day.

There is a room assigned to Sivananda Pharmacy where quite a number of specific medicines are made under the strict supervision of a Swami who is an expert in Ayurvedic knowledge. Every ingredient used in this pharmacy is pure, genuine and reliable. I had an occasion to see the working of this Pharmacy.

Sivananda Hospital : Both the indoor and outdoor patients are treated by an expert allopath, homeopath and an Ayurvedic physician. When occasion arises beds for indoor patients are provided who are carefully nursed and treated.

Library : There is a library attached to the Ashram containing a few thousand books on various subjects.

Museum : The most interesting and perhaps the first of its kind is the Yoga Museum where models, designs, charts, maps relating to Yogic Sadhanas and illustrative paintings are exhibited. The articles are properly arranged for the benefit of visitors who can get a bird's eye-view of all its symbolic and allegoric significance. There is one Sanyasi who is quite well-versed in the Vedantic lore, acting as an in-charge of this museum. It is he who explains the purpose of this museum and the meaning of all that it contains to every visitor. I learnt many things which were unknown to me so far by the charts and plans which were exhibited there.

Last but not the least in importance is the poor-feeding which one notices almost every day ; soon after the Ashramites finish their meals the poor beggars and destitutes (who are so numerous in pilgrimage places) are properly fed by this Ashram. It will be news for some to know that thirty-three per cent of books published by Swamiji are given away as free gifts to various scholars and aspirants in India. It was both pleasure and profit to have found an opportunity of visiting this Ashram which is doing such an excellent work in the cause of suffering humanity. The inspiring and guiding spirit of this Ashram is Swami Sivananda himself whose one aim and end in life is to raise mankind from animality and from humanity to divinity. He has no desire of his own. Whatever he earns he spends on

the upkeep and welfare of the Ashramites and really keeps nothing for himself. His needs are very simple. He is a living example to lacs of Sanyasis and Sadhus who are

found all over India. A Sanyasi has to live for others and not for himself. So does Swamiji. We need more Sanyasis like him in this unfortunate land.

Life Series

THE DIVINE SINGER

(Sri B. S. Mathur, M. A.)

THERE is enough of suffering in the world. Frustration is evident. Life itself seems dull and a sorry scheme of things. What is there to encourage people to live well on earth, to live in joy, peace, comfort and happiness? One might say "nothing!"

Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh is an ocean of love and devotion. His thoughts, as communicated through his endless stress of books, published by the Sivananda Publication League (Rishikesh) are tremendously uplifting and elevating. His song of love is the song of Divine Life, a song that is to make the world Divine and happy.

Happiness resides in divinity. It emanates from divinity. But what is divinity that the Swami is so ceaselessly preaching and also practising? Not only that. He is making that divinity a possession for so many millions of the world, now living in the pathos of ignorance. He wants us to go back to the origin. That is possessing divinity. That is living in happiness and also living through happiness to reach salvation.

Think of the origin. You get at God. You seem to live in Him and for Him. What was there in the beginning of things? There was God all alone. But how could He live all alone? He is a great creator and He created things in His own image. What are we then? All of us emanations from God. God lives in all of us. You want to express Him. You have actions to

perform; you have dreams to dream; you have thoughts. Why not have Him in them? That is expressing Him in your deeds, dreams and thoughts. Why not have Him in them? That is expressing Him in your deeds, dreams and thoughts. This way lies man's salvation, his unspeakable joy and comfort. This is the way preached by the Swamiji.

What a noble idea! This is going back to the origin. This is reaching Him. This is living in divinity, the life divine. Why not live it M?

It is not very difficult to live it. The Swami has shown a simple path. We have just to cogitate. There the matter is not to end. We have to act, after cogitation. We have to live according to our cogitations. First, we have to emancipate our minds. Emancipated actions will follow. The aim is purity of action after purity of thoughts. That is the second thing, the final thing, the life that we have to live, if we are to justify that we are created by God in His own image.

Swami Sivananda speaks thus :

"Without love life becomes narrow, limited, and is replete with misfortunes. Without love, life is a prey to countless evils. Without love, life is a victim to sins and propensities to hatred. Verily, with love, life is the extensive life of joy. With love nothing is impossible; everything shall be thine and all shall be well and good with thee. Live in this love in daily life."

This is his divine song. Nothing new but how tremendously ennobling? Man must live in love and devotion. This is his

philosophy. This philosophy he is living in actual life. Those who had had opportunities of living with him could very well understand the idea behind what he says so powerfully about love.

Love is not merely an emotion. It is not that. But it is more than that. It is a steady philosophy, a way of life. Love means sympathy. But sympathy cannot flow all of a sudden. It must be preceded by understanding. This is the idea behind love. 'Love thy neighbour' is the same thing as 'understand thy neighbour'. Loving is understanding.

What an unlimited stream of human ills in the world? And what is it due to? There is lack of understanding; there is no sympathy. Man has to be understood; he has to be regarded as man. All this is possible through love. Hence its importance. And so the Swami writes :

"Love is the very nature of your essential Self ;

act not against this spiritual law. The glorious truth about the Reality is that it exists as Love. Out of love ye are born. By love ye are sustained. and unto love ye shall return. So, let all contemplate on love, let all meditate on love, let all practise this love. For, love is your bread, shelter and strength."

Think deeply. The spiritual law is also the law of life ; it may be what you may call the Life Divine. Go further. Love is bread : love is shelter ; love is strength.

Swamiji has lived long in sacredness. He is a world-reformer and a social worker for the emancipation of mankind. You ask him for message. He speaks of love, and there he stops. But you are not to stop. This is what he wants you to do.

Here is the message of eternity, for a continuous life of sacredness, joy and peace and plenty. Let us start loving and acting simultaneously. The life of Light will follow ; the life divine will come apace and in plenty. Let us follow the sage of Rishikesh.

THE PILGRIM'S GUIDES

(Dr. D. G. Londhey. M. A., Ph.D.)

[The following books by Sri Swami Sivananda] have been reviewed by one of the most eminent educationists and a renowned philosopher, Dr. D. G. Londhey, M. A., Ph. D. (Leipzig). Dr. Londhey, who is the Principal of the National College of Nagpur, has also the unique distinction of being an earnest seeker of the Life Immortal. These reviews have been incorporated in the bibliography of the Institute of International Philosophy of Paris, which is reputed to be the biggest collection house of philosophical literature in the world. The Institute of International Philosophy is also a well-known centre of education, which draws a large number of students of Philosophy from all parts of the world.—Ed.]

EASY STEPS TO YOGA

By

Swami Sivananda

Yoga Vedanta Forest University Series No. 1.
Revised and enlarged third edition, published by
Y. V. F. U. S., for Divine Life Society, Ananda
Kutir, Rishikesh, 1949. Price Rs. 3/- Pp. 260.

There is a widespread misunderstanding among the Westerners and Easterners that Yoga is a difficult discipline and many turn away from Yoga because they mistakenly believe that it is out of their reach.

Swami Sivananda has given a practical refutation to this mistaken notion by showing to the spiritual aspirants easy steps to climb the ladder of spiritual development. He lays special emphasis on Brahmacharya (Celibacy, continence) as the indispensable first step towards Yoga. The most important contribution of this book is the practical hints and suggestions that Swamiji has given for making steady progress on the spiritual path and how to avoid

obstacles in meditation. It can safely be said that in the whole literature on Yoga, there is no book which gives such an easy introduction to the principles and practice of Yoga.

BRAHMA SUTRAS Part I & II

By

Swami Sivananda

Published by Sivananda Publication League,
Rishikesh Himalayas 1949. Price Rs. 7/-. Pp. 539.

Next to Upanishads, Brahma Sutras constitute a most important philosophical work in the whole literature of Indian Philosophy. The Brahma Sutras is an attempt to give a consistent and a well rounded system of Monistic philosophy based upon the Upanishadic teachings. The book under review is a very important addition to the literature on Brahma Sutras. The explanation and commentary on each Sutra is given in a simple style so that even an ordinary reader can understand and benefit by the teachings of the Vedantic Philosophy. Besides original Sanskrit text, there is word to word translation and an exhaustive commentary given on each Sutra. Swamiji's inimitable style gives a peculiar flavour to the reading of this important philosophical work. There is no doubt that all students of Indian Philosophy and more particularly all aspirants for spiritual enlightenment will immensely be benefitted by this very important work on the Brahma Sutras.

VAIRAGYA MALA

By

Sri Swami Sivananda

Ananda Kutir, Published by the Sivananda Publication League, Ananda Kutir Post, Rishikesh, U. P. (Himalayas) 1949. Price Rs. 2/-. Pp. 148.

In the whole gamut of spiritual categories there is no concept which is so important as that of Vairagya. Vairagya is not simply non-attachment to the world.

In Yoga the concept of Vairagya has a positive significance. It shows mastery and control over the situation in which a man finds himself placed. Vairagya is the very basis and foundation of spiritual progress. In the book under review Swami Sivananda has given us 64 inspiring sonnets on such subjects like the immanascent character of the world, vanity of human wishes, the utter uselessness of craving after material goods. If a sadhak is really to succeed in spiritual Sadhana he must make himself steadfast in Vairagya. No student of spiritual enlightenment should miss a study of this "Garland of Detachment." The book is especially to be recommended to the Western Students of Indian thought and culture because they will really appreciate what important place it holds in the path of spiritual advancement.

VEDANTA JYOTHI

(Light of Vedanta)

By

Swami Sivananda

Published by Sivananda Publication League, Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh, U. P. (India). Price Rs. 1/12, 1949. Pp. 76.

Vedanta is the brightest jewel in the cultural achievements of India. Vedanta is philosophy but Vedanta is religion also. In fact Vedanta lays down a way of life. Though philosophical teachings of Vedanta are difficult to understand, Swamiji has been eminently successful in the presenting the teachings of Vedanta in the simplest and easiest terms. The special feature of the book is Vedanta in humour. We read about Vedantic compressed tablet, Vedantic Bomb and Vedantic Vitamin. There is no denying the fact that this small book will bring light of knowledge to many souls groping in the dark. We heartily commend this book to the notice of all those who are interested in the study of Indian thought and culture.

SCIENCE OF PRANAYAM

(Revised and enlarged 5th Edition)

Swami Sivananda Saraswati.

Published by Yoga Vedanta Forest University,
Divine Life Society, Ananda Kutir, Rishikesh,
Price Rs. 3/-. Pp. 160.

The Indian science of Yoga includes as its very important part, Hatha Yoga, which is a culture of the body with the special aim of realisation of the Self. At present there seems to be some bias amongst the educated persons against Hatha Yoga, but it can safely be said that Hatha Yoga forms a very important part of the comprehensive science of Yoga or spiritual culture. Swami Sivananda himself being an adept in the theory and practice of Hatha Yoga has done a very signal service to the spiritual aspirants by publishing a book on the Science of Pranayam. The control of breath is a necessary preliminary for the control of the mind. As modern science

teaches us mind is anchored in brain and brain is fed by oxygenated blood. Thus the control of breath is highly important for the conquest of the mind. The book under review is divided into three chapters, the first discusses subjects like Prana and Pranayam, the length of air currents, the centring of Prana etc. Chapter II deals with other necessary accompaniments and preparations for Pranayam like the time and place and diet etc. suitable for the practice of Pranayam. A very important section deals with the Awasthas, Aramba Awastha, Ghata Awastha, Prarischaya Awastha, and Nishpatti Awastha. Chapter three gives details about the different types of Pranayam. Nadi Suddhi etc., What is most useful is that he gives special instructions and exercises which will be very helpful for the practice of Pranayam for the spiritual aspirants. All those who are interested in spiritual culture will do well in studying this book.

SIVA GITA

(Translated into French by Srimati Karina)

(Continued from January issue)

XII

Gita, Upanishads, Bhagawat, Yoga-vashishta, Avadbooth Gita, Vivekachudamani are my constant companions.

I am a strange mixture of service, devotion, Yoga and wisdom. I am a follower of Sri Sankara. I am a Kevala-Adwaita Vedantin. I am not at all a dry, lip-Vedantin. I am a practical Vedantin.

I practise and advocate the Yoga of Synthesis. I practice Ahimsa, Satyam and Brahmacharya.

Glory to Sri Sankara !

Sivananda.

Gita, Upanishads, Bhagawat, Yoga-vashishta, Avadhooth Gita, Vivekachudamani (livres sacrés) sont mes compagnes fideles.

Je suis un etrange melange de service, de devotion, de yoga et de sagesse. Je suis un disciple de Sri Sankara. Je suis un kevala-Adwaita vedantin. Je ne suis point un Vedantin aux mots secs. Je suis un Vedantin-pratiquant.

Je mets en pratique et je soutiens le Yoga des Syntheses. Je pratique Ahimsa (non-violence) Satyam (veracite) et Brahmacharya (celibat ou chastete mentale et corporelle).

Gloire a Sri Sankara !

Sivananda.

XIII

I respect all saints and prophets of all religions. I respect all religions, all cults, all faiths and all creeds,

I serve all, love all, mix with all and see the Lord in all. I stick to my promises. I serve the poor. This is my delight. I do mental prostrations to asses, dogs, trees, bricks, stones and all creatures. I respect elders and Sadhus. I obey. I please all through sincere selfless service.

I attend on guests very carefully. I run hither and thither to serve them. I shampoo the legs of sick persons and Sadhus.

Sivananda.

Je respecte tous les saints et tous les prophètes de toutes les religions, Je respecte toutes les religions, tous les cultes, toutes les croyances et toutes les sectes.

Je sers tous, J'aime tous, je fréquente tous et je vois le seigneur en tous. Je tiens mes promesses. Je sers les pauvres. Cela fait mon bonheur. Mentalement je me prosterne devant les ânes, les chiens, les arbres, les briques, les pierres et toute les créatures. Je respecte les plus âgés et les Sadhus (saints hommes qui ont renoncé au monde pur se consacrer à la vie spirituelle). J'obéis. Je tâche de plaire à tous en les servant sincèrement et sans aucun intérêt.

Je m'occupe de mes hôtes avec beaucoup de sollicitude. Je cours à gauche et à droite pour les servir. Je masse les jambes des malades et des sadhus.

Sivananda

XIV

I give very prompt reply to all my letters. I do several things at a time. I write with electric speed.

I spend everything. I do lot of charity. I do not keep anything. I take immense delight in feeding the poor and my students. I try to be a mother to them.

I talk to others on things which I have myself practised. I look within always, introspect, analyse and examine. I hold the Trishul ; spiritual diary, daily routine and resolve.

Sivananda.

Je réponds avec expressément à toutes mes lettres. Je fais plusieurs choses à la fois. J'écris avec une rapidité électrique. Je dépense tout. Je fais beaucoup de charité. Je ne garde rien. Je suis bien heureux de nourrir les pauvres et mes étudiants. Je tâche d'être une mère pour eux.

Je parle aux autres des choses que j'ai pratiqué moi-même. Toujours j'ai le regard tourné à l'intérieur, je fais de l'introspection, j'analyse, j'examine. Je tiens Trishul : journal spirituel, routine quotidienne et mes résolutions. (Trishul : Trident, que le Seigneur Siva tient à la main comme emblème royal. Siva manie le monde en contrôlant Maya (illusion) avec les 3 Gunas : les 3 états de la vie spirituelle).

Sivananda.

ASHRAM NEWS AND NOTES

SWAMI GITANANDAJI

THE Yoga-Vedanta Forest University offers its grateful thanks to Sri Swami Gitanandaji for joining the institution as a Gita-propagandist, in the first week of April, 1951. The Swami hails from a noble family (his brother is Justice A.S.P. Aiyer, I.C.S. Bar-at-Law, of the Madras High Court), and has devoted his whole life in

the pursuit of the realisation of the Absolute according to the teachings of Gita. He has travelled extensively throughout India, disseminating the immortal Gospel of the Lord, and is already well-known in the spiritual circles as a great exponent of Gita Philosophy. He is at present delivering a series of lectures on Gita at the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University. Some of his discourses

are being published in the *Forest University Weekly* and *The Divine Life*.

GAURANGA JAYANTI

The Ashram celebrated the Gauranga Mahaprabhu Jayanti on the 23rd March. Speeches were delivered in homage of this illustrious saint who established the religion of Sankirtan Bhakti at a most critical period of Hinduism when it was badly shaken by the whirlwind of alien influences. Prayers were offered and Akhanda Kirtan sung in chorus in memory of Saint Gauranga.

GOOD FRIDAY

On the same day was also celebrated the Good Friday. The sacred occasion, representing the triumph of the Good over the evil,—the glorious advent of Christ to Life Immortal through death mortal,—was observed with due solemnity and fervour. In the Evening Satsang, the inmates of the Ashram offered prayers to the sacred memory of Christ whose Gospel of Love and Forgiveness alone promises the panacea for the spiritually-dying world.

RAMA NAVAMI

Sri Rama Navami was celebrated by the Ashramites on the 15th April with Prabhat Pheri, common prayer and meditation in the morning; special worship, havan for world-peace and feeding of Mahatmas and Sadhaks and the poor at mid-day. Akhanda Ramayana Parayana was conducted throughout the day, and collective Japa of Sri Rama Mantra performed. There were recitations from *Ramacharitamanas* and other scriptures and Akhanda Kirtan of Rama Nam in the Evening Satsang.

Propaganda Tour

Sri Swami Sadanandaji (the Raja Yoga professor of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest University and formerly a professor in the Madras Presidency College) is at present touring the Gangetic plains and visiting all principal towns and cities by stages, in the

manner of a Parivrajaka Sanyasin. He has already delivered lectures at Fyzabad, Banaras and Patna. Reports of his tour are being published in the *Yoga-Vedanta Forest University Weekly*.

Sri Swami Satchidanandaji, the Hatha Yoga professor of the Forest University, is at present touring South India. He is an adept in all the branches of the Yogic exercises. At Nandi Hill Station and Chikballapur he has opened branches of the Divine Life Society, where he conducted classes in Yogasans and Pranayamas for some time. Reports of his activities are also published in the *Forest University Weekly*.

Srimati Karina, an Indonesian seeker of Truth and a disciple of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, who has made India her home, has opened a Ladies' Section in the Tasker Town (Bangalore) branch of the Divine Life Society.

The Nilasandra (Bangalore) and the Tadepalligudam branches of the Society are conducting special night schools as a part of their activities for the dissemination of knowledge. The Hyderabad branch of the Society has also opened a night school where students can learn Hindi.

Visitors

Following were some of the visitors to the Ashram during March-April: Sri Swami Nityananda, who gave a highly interesting discourse at a special gathering held under the auspices of the Forest University; Sri Shivadasani, Commissioner of Kumaon, Tehri and Robilkhand divisions; Sri B. M. Maheswari, District Magistrate, Tehri; Sri J.T. Beskine from London; and Sri C.E. Diem from Melbourne (Australia).

Sri George Henry Rundstein of Argentine, Srimati C. Broquies de Roger of France, and Srimati Rasamani of Ceylon, are at present staying at the Ashram as aspirants of Yoga.

BOOK REVIEWS

WONDERS OF TIME-SPACE

By Swami Madhava Tirtha, Vedanta Ashram,
Post Valad, Medra RS, Ra. 3 (Pp. 295)

CONCEPT OF TIME IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

By the same author. Rs. 1/2 (Pp. 71)

The first work is an explanation of the Theory of Relativity discovered by Prof. Einstein and corroborated by the ancient philosophical texts like the *Yogavasishta*. The second work, as the title suggests, is based on the background of Indian scriptures. The holy Swami has made it clear that the great modern discovery is not something quite unknown to mankind up to this time but is only a discovery through a scientific and mathematical intellect of what was previously known through intuition and supported by the logical reason. A correct understanding of this tremendous but fundamental truth and application of the same to practical life will remedy the dreaded ills of our day. Swami Madhava Tirtha's exposition has the great advantage of having originated from a philosophical intellect and a saintly heart, and is sure to impress the readers.

THE GOSPEL OF HERMES

By Duncan Greenlees, Theosophical Publishing
House, Adyar, Madras (Pp. 263).

The work begins with an elaborate and interesting introduction giving the importance and the influence of the writings of the Hermes upon later mystics and writings of that kind. The whole work is a wonderful gospel of spiritual life dealing with God, world and man, their relations and the Way to God. This mystic philosophy of the ancient Greeks that inspired men of wisdom long before Christ is meant for all those whose aim is the lofty height of the profoundest Divinity that is within. It is a gospel for all. A study of this book at once makes one remember the

great mystics; Plotinus of Alexandria and Dionysins the Areopagite and other great philosophers of the ancient Greek world. The scholarly notes accompanying the book make the subject highly interesting, and befits the reputation of the author.

UPADESHA AMRITAM

By Sri Malayalaswamulavaru, Vyasashram,
Yerpedu (Pp. 219).

The sayings of the revered saint are incorporated in this book in the form of teachings for the 365 days of the year. The teachings are most practical, being the direct Upadesha of an experienced Yogi and contain short descriptions of practically all the aspects of Sadhana. Seekers of Self-knowledge would be greatly inspired and benefited by the study and practice of these ennobling sayings.

HINDU ALL

By D. N. H. Hindwal. Thacker Spink & Co.,
Calcutta (Pp. 264), Rs. 4

The title of the book can as well be read as 'All about the Hindus'. It is a thrilling exposition and a beautiful account of the true spirit of Hinduism. The author takes the reader along a path of careful examination of the different prevalent conceptions of Hinduism held by people and finally reaches the destination where it is realised that Hinduism is not to be defined in any narrow sense, that really it is as difficult to define as the Absolute of the Upanishads, that real Hinduism is recognition of the one underlying oneness or unity which is the very foundation upon which the diversities of life appear, and that the different stages of truth-experience are finally fused and accepted therein as steps to one eternal truth-experience. The necessity to realise this oneness in practical life, in whatever aspect of it, it may be lived, is stressed upon here through giving a short history of India

and emphasis on the essential glories of true Hinduism.

THE IDEAL LIFE AND MOKSHA

By Swami Narayananda, Published by Messrs. N. K. Prasad & Co., Rishikesh (U. P.), Pp. 208. Rs. 3/8.

Swami Narayananda's treatise is a boon to the Sadhaks or aspirants who struggle to understand the meaning of life and its relation to spiritual knowledge. The four great ends of human life, *viz.*, Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha are excellently described with the knowledge born of actual practice and experience. The four paths of Karma, Bhakti, Yoga and Jnana are succinctly treated of, giving the gist of their different methods of culminating in a common goal.

The style is simple, the matter is made intelligible even to the beginner and nothing important is left unsaid. The merit of the book lies not merely in its exhaustiveness and yet conciseness but also in its being the production through the pen of one who has passed through these stages of Yoga practices.

TEARS OF EARTH

By B. D. Shastri. Sujata Publications, Maigra (Gaya) and Delhi. Re. 1

The author's lyrics collected in this book comprise some beautiful poems written in honour of the works of saints like Buddha, Gandhi and others, evoking the spirit of world-peace and common weal of humanity.

THE SIVANANDA GYANA YAGNA LIBRARY

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